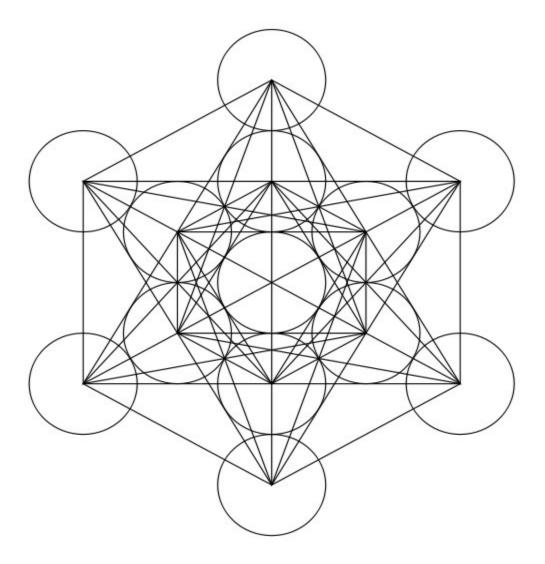


How To Do Nothing Well

A Guide To Meditating Actively



Joe Bill Schirtzinger

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to all those who have helped me on my journey, alive, dead, alive-dead, and all manner of positions and states in between or indeterminate. May it serve as a useful manual in the universe for those who wish to navigate the internal landscapes. Like Newton, I stand on the shoulders of too many giants to name, but my thanks to all the mystics and seers before me, who were brave enough to voice their opinions, and put ink to parchment. Likewise, may I express thanks to the Unseen. You know who you are.

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Preface

Life is full of pain, torment, and suffering. What good does something like meditation do in a world rife with this? What sort of unjust universe places us in situations such as these? Why should I bother to meditate at all, if the universe is happy to subject me to such torments?

This is exactly the sort of thing that my younger self would have asked. Although I did not know it then, I was asking questions that the Buddha had asked long before albeit in a much more Neo-Goth sort-of-way.

The Buddha and I had had a brush when I was younger that I barely remembered. I was in a Chinese restaurant and interacted with a statue of him in a way that prompted the owners to ask me, "Why you do that to Buddha? Buddha good!" I do not even remember what I did to Buddha, but whatever it was, he has my apologies. I suppose since he found the solution to suffering, he probably did not mind terribly.

When my grandfather died, I found I nearly died before him. Part of it was grief-induced. I was close with my grandfather. Part of it had to do with the above questions. There were not many people I was close to the way I was with my grandfather. I was not impressed with the universe as a safe, fun place to live. My own abusive childhood at the hands of my father told me that bad things were possible and commonplace.

The way in which I almost died involved my body becoming very ill to the point my kidneys shut down. Three weeks and somewhere near eighty needle holes in my arms later, I was back among the living.

However, I was not back because medical science brought me back, although that was certainly part of it. I was back because I had an experience where I was given a choice to come back. When I was in the middle of my illness, I traveled somewhere very blue, and had an interesting discussion with some "large knowledgeable thing" and went into a life review. The outcome of this life review was that I decided I needed to stick around although reluctantly so.

I was fifteen at the time I had this experience, and it took me the better part of ten years to understand what I went through and why. There was a definite process to death, but it was not exactly as advertised in Christian literature with which I was mainly familiar. After shoveling through a mound of metaphysical and philosophical texts, I finally came to some realizations--one of which was how to properly meditate which was not much different than the process of dying.

As is so often the case, when I came back, I did not return as I left. Every bit of knowledge earned has a price, and the experience did not "put my body back together" the way it was previous. I had some Chronic Fatigue type of symptoms, along with some Fibromyalgia. They would not manifest in full force until I was a little older, but they were hiding under the surface.

It is through meditation then, that I am able to sit and type these words--when many people afflicted with these conditions cannot rise out of bed. I had to learn to meditate to survive, and although the situations that unfolded to get me there are not things I would like to repeat, the information I gained has been invaluable.

The one thing I have learned above all others about meditation is relatively simple--one can resolve that which is on the inside internally, or one can experience it externally in physical reality. Meditation may seem like a lot of "doing nothing", but would should hope to "do nothing" so well as to actually achieve such a state. Such a person would be blessed beyond measure, and a true gift to the human race.

Joe Bill Schirtzinger

Princeton, KY 2013

Introduction

Meditation is a discipline that has remained fairly consistent over time. The image of a guru with his fingertips touching or the palms of his hands overlapped is a widely recognized icon.

Yet, most meditation centers on focusing on the breathing, and not much else. This is certainly a beneficial meditation, but it is not a meditation that most people will be able to do much with, other than notice their breath, which is important.

A more active meditation, where a person does self-maintenance, seems paramount. In a busy world, although it might be helpful to notice one's breathing for awhile, it is not sufficient to kick in the higher consciousness in such a way as to operate from that higher mind in most situations. People simply think of it as relaxing, and nothing more.

On the other hand, if there were a way to view meditation as interrogating different components of one's soul, one could use such a method to bring themselves into spiritual alignment. By seeing each area and what that area does or does not do, one can begin to make changes to themselves by paying attention to the data streams within their own personal energy systems.

Usually, people tend to do this through sleep. Sleep allows certain energies to bubble up that are otherwise unnoticed, and for these images to be processed to varying levels. It is far better if a person can process these images in waking life, and learn to interrogate themselves and become conversant in their own "soul language" so they can understand themselves and when they are on track, or off track.

Instead of meditation being a simple relaxation, it becomes more like taking one's car to the mechanic to be sure that the parts and pieces are still functioning as they should. By being able to do this, a person can prevent health trouble before it arises, and keep their own mind more peacefully centered. By taking

each component bit by bit, and putting it in the place it should occupy, the spiritual self starts to flourish and many unexpected changes can take place inside. Likewise, by being familiar with one's own energy systems, one can then take this knowledge and apply it to others such that they can help to heal both themselves and others.

This, it shall be noted, is a bit different than meditations in the past. The goal of this form of meditation is no less than complete self-knowledge. It takes time and practice, and one must learn a new way of thinking that is more symbolic in most cases than literal. However, if one takes the time to develop this, then the possibilities really begin to open up as a person steps into the fullness of their being.

The Energy Systems of the Body

The energy systems of the body are an old art. It is hard to say when they were first traced out, or by whom. The only thing that can be said is that many cultures across time separated by distance seem to arrive at their own version of the energy systems which share certain commonalities. They all map out the currents and areas that energy flows, or does not flow, and encourage it to move by various methods.

Yet, just what are these energy systems? Most mysticism falters with the language to describe them, much as it is difficult to describe any fundamental concept. If one tries to explain what an atom is to a non-scientist, one quickly discovers how concepts one takes for granted to build upon prove problematic to explain to others.

The easiest way to describe these systems is by analogy. There are "circuits" in the body, that conduct energy, much like electricity. The human body acts

much like a crystal and conducts these currents in various ways. The ability for the body to conduct this electricity says something for the health of it, for where this circuitry jams is where disease or dysfunction is likely to manifest.

Where does this energy come from? God, the universe. Whatever. What matters is that it is there, and needs to be maintained. What mediates it is consciousness, although often the consciousness has fallen into the subconscious which is where meditation arrives to raise awareness of this situation and facilitate release.

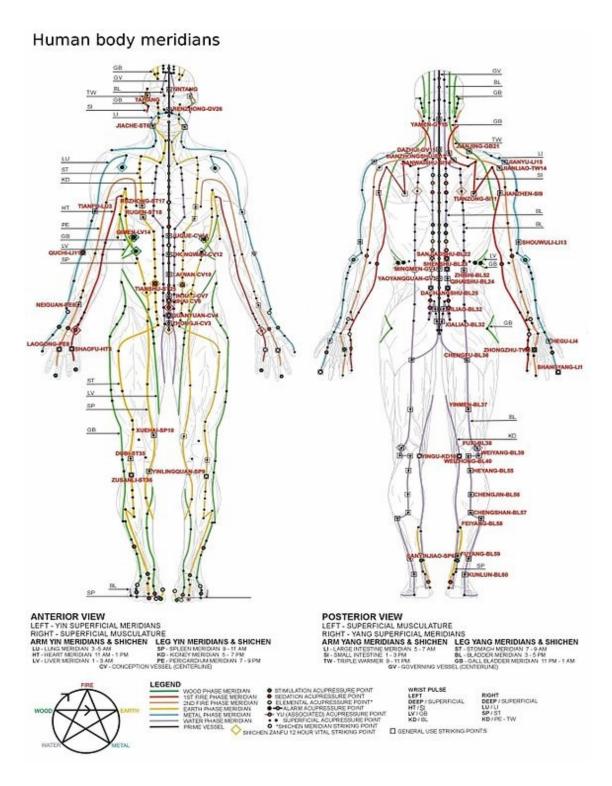
Just how did these cultures map out these paths? Well, evidently at one point, people were better able to see them visually. However, even if one cannot see them, one can feel them. The easiest way to conceive of this is to think of how it feels when someone steps into the room when you are otherwise occupied. That feeling that someone is in the room is somewhat similar to sensing energy flows. You might not be able to describe exactly how you know what you know, but you know it nonetheless because you feel it.

A more immediate experiment concerns rubbing your hands together palms facing one another roughly an inch or so apart. Naturally, you will feel heat, but you will also feel a sort of tingling or "heat above the hotness" on the palms of both hands. This is chi, or energy, or whatever word you want to use to describe the sensation is. If you do not feel much of this in your hands, it is likely that you are blocked. Most people are blocked in one way or another, but some people because of the natural resilience of their energy systems, might still feel more energy here anyway.

I will now issue a blanket statement that should be the centerpiece of anyone doing healing work--all healing takes place within this energy system--whether it be through some method like meditation, Reiki, or surgery. How might surgery achieve this? Well, certainly, by the time one has reached the necessity of surgery, the energy system has been stagnant for awhile to the point it has manifested as physical disease. By intervening at the physical level, the solution sought is to "bust this stagnation" at the spiritual level. It is simply a "level down" from the origin of the problem--like remedying an issue with a blueprint of a home by first building it in physical reality and then altering the blueprint

retroactively as rooms are added or knocked down. It makes more sense to make such changes at the blueprint as opposed to wasting time at the "slower level" of physical reality.

So, we can see and understand that the body is, in essence, energy. A big distributor of the energy through the various meridians are the chakras. Chakras are major points along the spine that spin in a wheel like fashion. They act much like cogs inside a machine. Their job is to take in energy from the outside, and distribute it inside, as much as possible through the meridians. (The Indian word for the energy channels is "nadis".) The problem, as previously discussed, is that these meridians can become blocked from our consciousness. However, it is not always the case that our consciousness remembers why such blockages are there, because some blockages do not originate from the current life, but from some other life, somewhere else.



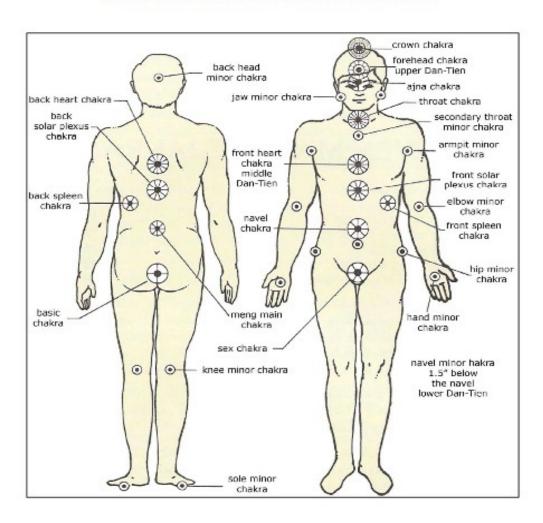
Some Energy Meridian Systems In Chinese Thinking

Image Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

Other Lives, Chakras, and the Flow of Energy

By now, you are probably thinking something along the lines of, "Great. Now I not only have to worry about this life, BUT ALSO those other lives too?" I am afraid the answer to that question is "yes". This is why all those spiritual texts emphasize the importance of conduct that does not interfere with the energy body. This includes emotions to avoid, actions not to take, and so on. However, if you choose to indulge them, then the consequence always shows up within the energy body. There is no escaping it. The consequent blocks are there not because the universe wants them there, but because of the decisions we made with

ELEVEN MAJOR CHAKRAS & RELATED MINOR CHAKRA SYSTEM



Some Chakra Points

Image Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

There are no "get out of jail free" cards. We have to re-balance ourselves, painful though that may be, and we must do it with the added burden of only dimly remembering how we became what we became and why we are experiencing what we are experiencing. If we do not balance ourselves internally via meditation, then we must live it on the outside to gain the necessary experience. It is through the temporal mechanism of cause and effect that our energy systems finally find equilibrium, and discover why certain actions are useful and good and others are not. Once we have this down, our energy bodies are free to assume non-solid form. The practice of yogis is aimed at achieving this end and it is possible to achieve such a thing while still having physical form.

While it is possible to meditate on any part of the body, a very good place to start are on the main chakras because they are such large energy distribution centers. It follows if we can step through a meditation that uses these chakra points and unblock them to a great extent that we will have gone a long way toward balancing ourselves spiritually. It may well be that by meditating on a certain chakra we feel a corresponding pressure or pain down a particular meridian, and we can refine our healing work to that area as our practice deepens to alleviate or remedy the problem. Likewise, as we continue, we will likely remember our past lives, or flashes of them, and begin to integrate those experiences into ourselves so that they are no longer functioning subconsciously in a way that interferes with our current lives.

Meditation Mind Frame Basics

To begin meditation requires a shifting from normal thinking processes. To actively meditate requires a radical shift. What one must become proficient at doing is receiving data in all of its forms. Sometimes this data is emotional. Sometimes it is tactile. Sometimes it is visual. What one must not do is get carried away in trying to discover the meaning of the data as it comes. So, for instance, if someone were to see themselves drowning in a river, a bad way to actively meditate would be to start analyzing that scene. A better way to meditate in that situation would be to let that vision pass, then gently keep your focus and see if the area you are concentrating on offers any extra commentary. Perhaps it provides an emotional input. Perhaps it provides a number, or unusual letter. Perhaps it will only be a sound. Regardless of what is presented, we need to stay receptive to whatever the area is trying to tell us without judgment and without tearing down what we see in an overly scientific manner. We may think we see something else that is completely unrelated only to discover a little later that it actually was related, we just did not think it was at the time. Sometimes the connections can only be made after various disparate experiences because we only have part of the picture. By allowing our minds to constellate a full picture, we suddenly gain the needed insight.

Similarly, it is important we do not judge what we see, or for that matter, do not see. If we are greeted by some disturbing imagery, it does not mean meditation is to blame. Likewise, it does not necessarily mean we are to blame either. Our psyches and past incarnations have lived through all manner of occurrences--situations and scenarios that would now be considered taboo. The predominant culture in which we now live gives us rules and regulations for how we are expected to live, but the soul and its components do not care for such laws. What is there will be there regardless, and it is our job to become aware of what is there, whether it is pleasant or terrifying. After all, it is only through

knowledge of the entirety of our states, light, dark, and all permutations in between, that we can hope to find any measure of liberation. Anything incomplete we will be more inclined to live out, and certainly it is far better to greet a disturbing thought internally than externally.

It is critical to maintain a disposition of accepting that which comes without judgment and without much thought. A gentle mental note is often enough for later more conscious reflection.

Beginning Meditation Technique

This part of meditation can be done a million times, and will still never reach the point of "perfection". There is always more to learn, new things that develop, more to integrate. In these integrations, there are always new blockages that can arise, as awareness attempts to grasp and comprehend. The sum total of all spiritual traditions that ever have been or will be amounts to refinement of the following procedure.

First, put your focus on the bottoms of your feet. If you have shoes on, it can be helpful to remove them. If you can be outside in the grass, this is especially helpful, but if you cannot, contact with the floor in the environment you find yourself is sufficient.

Move your awareness to the bottom of your feet, specifically where the arch of the foot either is, or should be. Imagine a spiral on the bottom of both feet in this area. Imagine it extruding into three dimensions, and drilling down into the Earth like the roots of a tree. Feel this energy at the bottom of your feet for as long as it takes for you to begin to feel either cold on the bottom of your feet, hot on the bottom of your feet, or tingly. Perhaps some combination of all three may occur. The feeling that should be predominate in your mind, however, should be one of stability and heaviness--not so heavy that you feel like someone has squashed you with a boulder--but heaviness in the sense that you might have felt as a child when your shoes were off and you ran in the grass.

Once you establish this feeling, it is time to bring it up to the very base of your spine, or the first chakra. Many old texts will tell you to focus on the perineum, and there is value in keeping your focus here as it has a tendency to get hot or vibrate quicker than any other area. Let your mind settle here. Begin to take in information. What is here? Is it emotional? Do you have an early memory of your family? Is it happy or sad? Do you feel pain elsewhere when you focus here? Accept whatever you see or feel. Then, take note of the color present here. If it is any color other than rainbow or red, it likely needs to be drained. Imagine the connection that you established at your feet as a pipeline,

and let this area drain down it into the Earth. Note the color. Pay attention to any memories or sensations you get in your body. Is anything different? Once you get this area red, your job is complete. However, it may be that you have to do this technique several times before this happens. If you have trouble seeing anything, or otherwise are not sure, do not feel discouraged but do the best you can and move on with the rest of the meditation. It may well be some other area is off, above this area, and by doing this meditation, you eventually reach a place where you can see with ease.

The next place you want to move the energy up in your body that you started moving at your feet will be the second chakra, located approximately two inches below the navel. Let your mind rest here. What do you see? Is it emotional in nature? Creative? Sexual? Something you vaguely remember, but cannot put your finger on? Relax, let whatever needs to come arrive. Be accepting of what this area would like to show you. Examine the color. Is it something other than rainbow colored or orange? Better drain it as you did before if so. Try to go for the color orange, but again, if it does not take immediately do not become frustrated but continue on with the process.

Bring the energy up again. By now, it should feel a little like Christmas tree bulbs in that the electrical wire is draw from the feet but runs to each bulb. Bring your energy up to the third chakra--located about where the lungs Y where the diaphragm rests. Let your mind sit here. What do you see? Does it feel comfortable? Does it seem tight? Are you able to see yourself easily accomplishing those things you want to do here? Does it feel like a struggle? Is there pain anywhere else in your body? Take note. What color is here? If it is not yellow or rainbow, it is time to drain this area. As much as is possible, go for a bright yellow. Pay attention to the shape, as you should for the previous areas as well. Is it round? Is it dented up? Make it as round as you can, and if some other color occurs to you to put here to get it eventually to yellow, then do that.

The next area to bring the energy to sits between the breasts at the sternum. This area is the heart chakra. Put your focus here. What emotions do you have here? Does it seem like you have plenty of self-love here, or are you feeling a quart low? Can you be compassionate here, or are you exhausted? Is there some past relationship issue here, or are you currently content? Examine the color. If it

is not rainbow colored or green, allow it to drain. Go as much as you can for the color green. As with the other areas, examine the shape, and take note of any pain or out-of-place sensation.

Now we bring the energy to the throat, which sits at the little divot where the clavicle meets. If you are not sure where that is, think about all those medical shows on TV where you see them inserting a breathing tube. Put your focus on this spot. Breathe. Can you breathe easy? Is it constricted here? Does it feel tight here compared to your chest? Are you able to express yourself how you most need to? If there are colors here other than blue or rainbow, drain it. Try to go for as much blue as you can.

Next, bring your focus either to between your eyebrows or the center of your forehead. This is the third eye area. When you focus here, what do you perceive? Is it clear, or hazy? Are you having concerns about bills and money, or is it relatively tranquil? Some of you may have interesting experiences at this area, as it is one of the areas that governs psychic sensitivity. If you see something here, do not pay much attention to it other than to take note it is here. What color is here? If it is not rainbow or indigo, it is time to drain it. Go for a deep purple/blue here as much as possible. If this area was weaker or black, and you could see nothing before, re-examine some of your previous chakras and see if your ability to perceive color is any better. Sometimes this area will be blocked and make perception harder until it is addressed.

Finally, bring your focus to the tip-top of your head at the very center. What do you see here? Is it black? Clear? Do you see angel like things or past family members? Do you see nothing at all? Acknowledge everything. Bring in the colors purple and white here, and imagine them funneling through all the previous areas all the way down to your feet. Let go of anything and everything when you do this, as this is a purging energy. How do you feel? Put your focus at the top of your head once again. What do you see here? Spiritually advanced people may experience a traveling sensation, or a conversation with a guide. Often, people simply fall asleep, and this is fine too, although one should strive toward staying more awake during semi-lucid states. Hold your focus here, and see if anything occurs to you that seems out of the ordinary. Pay attention to it.

Once you are done exploring the crown of your head, put your focus back down on your feet. Re-connect with that feeling of heaviness earlier. We certainly do not want you floating off or attempting to drive after such lofty heights as the crown chakra have been reached. You may need to stomp your feet on the floor, or let your toes dig into the soil if outdoors. Feel yourself return to your body in fullness. If you experience a lighter feeling, this is extremely positive. If you do not, but you feel slightly more energized, this is also good. If you feel neither of those, but you feel unsettled, this is also a good thing, but it means there is work to be done, and more things to be purged. You should take heart that you have opted to do something proactive on your journey instead of simply reacting.

This is the basic technique which uses color. There are other ways to meditate which I will discuss briefly further on.

Well, That Was Weird

So perhaps you were somewhat like me, and were skeptical of the idea of meditation, but once you tried it, you had some experiences you could not easily explain. One of my earliest experiences was a meditation where you keep your focus on your eyes in a bathroom mirror. At one point, I saw myself older, with much less hair, (which seems more like reality now) with some very ancient looking glowing symbols I did not recognize on my forehead. Considering I was not expecting to see anything, this came as somewhat of a surprise. The first question that crossed my mind was "All right, I am now officially crazy, but at least it is interesting." On the heels of that thought was something like "What the hell does THAT mean?"

I have found that with patience, usually things reveal themselves, but it is immensely handy to have someone around who has a lot of experience decrypting very old spiritual traditions and symbolism. Why? Well, as I have asserted before, as a soul, a person has had many incarnations and experiences. What the soul remembers is often not what the normal personality remembers—and often times it is something that very few people remember as the symbolism becomes progressively more ancient. Why would someone remember something from some other religion? The easiest way I can explain this is to simply issue the statement that most "modern religion" evolved from other basic beliefs. The mythology of the religion is packaged the same in most cases, but the stories shift around. It is somewhat like Greek myth—we can find parallels in Egyptian mythology and find parallels from each to Bible stories. Does that make any of it more true or less true? At the level of the soul, it is best not to ask these questions. It all was, is, and has been. The question is what the information tells you about yourself, and your own unique journey.

In modern life, a good resource for determining what you saw might be someone who is more Jungian. Jungian psychologists are well-versed with the concept of archetypes, and often learn more than a few. Of course, if they are lacking in ancient mythology, they can be of limited help. A student of divinity might help as well, but often they are limited to whatever religion they study.

With the internet, there are a world of resources at a person's fingertips that would have taken a scholar a very long time to unearth in the not-so-distant-past, and often times a person with a little diligence can start narrowing the parameters down of what they saw to help them gain an understanding.

Of course if you are reading this and I am still alive, you can always consult with me. If I am not alive, well then, that probably will make things more difficult.

Once you satisfy your curiosity, it might be time to venture further down the rabbit hole. If so, continue on!

Moving Beyond Color

The gateways to interaction with the chakras are many. One might use animals, sounds, or any number of things. At certain points, one may become advanced enough to meet a guide who helps or assists. A slightly more advanced version of meditation utilizes the following method:

At the first chakra, imagine you can take the planet Saturn out of the sky and drop it at that first area. Why Saturn? Because of what it represents, which would take books to cover. For the purposes of this meditation, simply know the planets have certain meanings all of their own in the inner world.

At the second chakra, imagine you can take the planet Jupiter out of the sky and drop it here.

At the third, Mars.

At the fourth, Venus.

At the fifth, Mercury.

At the sixth, combine the sun in the front at the forehead to the moon in the back of the head in some fashion.

At the seventh, probably nothing, but sometimes Uranus or Neptune work here.

Now, you might ask yourself why these particular planets at these areas, and I could spend many, many hours answering you, or you could just do what I suggest and see what you find. Odds are, you will figure it out on your own. If you do not, then be patient, and do some reading. Perhaps in a later work, I will delineate more about the planets. In addition to meditation, I am an astrologer, and the two complement each other well once one understands what they mean, but such an exploration is well beyond the scale of this work.

Ideally, the meditation methods I have outlined here would be practiced for 21 days consecutively for 15 to 20 minutes a day. At the end of that period, it would be highly surprising to find that someone undertaking the exercise seriously and openly would feel no change inside themselves.

After you get good at this, combine traditional breath work, and see where you go!

Concluding Remarks

What I have articulated here is a bare-bones "field manual". The experiences one can have in meditation are many and multi-faceted. It is possible to adapt your meditation disciplines and do activities with them that are more or less active. The methods I have outlined here will get you started and thinking in the "right direction" but it is by no means exhaustive.

One warning I will issue is that in beginning to meditate, one should be very careful that they do not attach to any particular state or sensation. Every meditation session is different, and what you feel on one day may not at all be what you feel on the next. If the expectation begins to form that a peaceful feeling is meditation, but a more unsettled one is not, then one has ensnared themselves in such a way as to impede further meditation. The goal is to be aware of whatever IS, and in order to acknowledge whatever IS, one must first "do nothing" but be in this "isness". Anything else will be a distraction from the goal.

As one progresses in their practice, new forms of information can show up. Some people may hear music. Some might have new sensations or feelings. Some might notice something that they thought was only marginally bothering them is in fact hindering them greatly. As awareness grows into subtle areas, information that was previously hard to acknowledge or was greatly muted becomes more evident. Consequently, the body might feel differently, or the person in the body might. If the immediate surroundings are questionable, it might be that a person starts to soak up the energy of those situations more easily than before. It might also be that a person releases things in a way they did not before.

It is, first and foremost an adventure--an encounter with yourself that you might not even have realized was possible. Since every path is different, it is difficult to say what you personally will come across, but so long as you do not attach to it, you will be fine. It might be uplifting or upsetting, but so long as that is experienced in the proper time, the beginning student will be fine.

Consistency is rewarded highly in meditation, although it might be hard to sense the effects of it at first. When you feel the inside of yourself settling down and not responding to external difficulties as much, this is a sign your meditation discipline is working to transform you.

About the Author

Once upon a time, Joe Bill Schirtzinger very nearly died. When he says he died, he doesn't mean "of embarrassment" but rather the actual "big you are buying the farm" variety.

While he was thinking about being dead, he had some experiences that he had a hard time explaining, that did not fit into any specific religious framework. He was told before he came back that he would likely not remember much of what happened. Fortunately, he is extremely stubborn, and so was able to keep his mind focused enough to retain a small piece of what he saw while he was there.

After that ordeal, Joe Bill Schirtzinger spent a long time trying to figure out why he experienced what he experienced, and voraciously read texts on mysticism and philosophy as though they



were laced with crack and Oreos. Along the way, he was introduced to mystical stuff he never figured he would be encountering from Magickal traditions to astrology.

In addition to all of the "mystical stuff", he holds a Bachelor's Degree in telecom, is a Reiki Master, has had poetry published, and owns a black cat named Tagni that has the destructive force of minor hurricanes. Likewise, he reads tarot cards and guides people through meditation in his professional life. This text was actually born of a need for a manual for those he assists in meditation.

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